

ROLE PLAYING & SHARED DECISION MAKING: GETTING READY FOR YOUR APPOINTMENT AND HEALTH TESTS

An important emerging concept in whole health self-management is “shared decision making.” In the WHAM training, shared decision making is defined as “the collaboration of a health professional and recipient of whole health services to determine the treatment and self-management actions for maximizing whole health.” In this collaboration, both the health professional and recipient of whole health services should be valued as experts. The doctor or nurse may be experts on medications, tests, and treatment, but equally important is the recipient of whole health services who uses skills like person-centered planning and the eliciting of the Relaxation Response as an expert on self-management.

Following are 2 suggested scenarios for role playing:

1. A peer seeks support from a peer leader after learning that his blood pressure was high when taken at a health fair. He did not understand what terms like “systolic” and “diastolic” meant and due to his anxiety is having problems sleeping. The peer leader demonstrates respectful listening and validates the peer’s concerns. Then, if appropriate, the peer leader suggests brainstorming to provide more information, like support to search on the internet about high blood pressure and ways to self-manage it. The peer leader shares the concept of shared decision making and becoming an expert on self-management of whole health issues like high blood pressure. The peer leader introduces the handout called “Questions to ask about medical tests” and offers support on how to fill it out. (Take 10 minutes to role play this scenario using volunteers from the group and/or trainers)
2. In conversation with a peer leader, a peer expresses concern about weight gain and whether medication could be causing the gain. The peer shares how meetings with the doctor or nurse are frustrating because they always focus on mental illness symptoms and how the medications help those symptoms, and never seem interested in discussing the weight gain or how gaining weight could negatively be impacting obtaining a meaningful life. The peer leader demonstrates respectful listening and validation of the peer’s concerns. The peer leader shares information on the concept of shared decision making and how that process should be a collaboration with two experts — the doctor or nurse and the recipient of whole health services. The peer leader introduces the handout called “Getting ready for your Appointment” and offers support on how to fill it out. (Take 10 minutes to role play this scenario using volunteers from the group and/or trainers)

Questions to ask about medical tests:

- Why is the test being done?
- What does the test involve? How should I get ready?
- Are there any dangers or side effects?
- How will I find out the results?
- How long will it take to get the results?
- What will we know after the test?

Getting ready for your appointment

Reason for visit:

What am I doing to address?

What do I need help with?

Life or health changes since last visit:

Questions:

1)

2)

3)

Challenges with current treatment:

Current medications:

Medication Questions:

Medication refills:

Link to an online question generator:

<http://www.ahrq.gov/questionsaretheanswer/questionBuilder.aspx>

integration.samhsa.gov
integration@thenationalcouncil.org
202.684.7457



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Health Resources & Services Administration